

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4702
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BEIRUT 3632

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, LE
SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR
LEBANON FOR FY 1979

REF: (A) STATE 133136 (DTG 091616Z JUN 77), (B) BEIRUT 3264
(DTG 081445Z JUL 77), (C) BEIRUT 2869 (DTG 160752Z JUN 77)

1. SUMMARY. BECAUSE OF THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR, THE US
HAS NOT HAD AN ACTIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN
LEBANON FOR SEVERAL YEARS. US INTERESST IN STABILITY IN THE
MIDDLE EAST, HOWEVER, NOW CALLS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW
PROGRAM IN LEBANON. THE PRIMARY THREAT TO LEBANON IS NOT
FROM ABROAD BUT FROM WITHIN, BOTH FROM ARMED DISSIDENT
LEBANESE GROUPS AND FROM THE PALESTINIANS. LEBANON MUST
ALSO KEEP AN EYE ON THE INTENTIONS OF ITS TWO POWERFUL
NEIGHBORS, ISRAEL AND SYRIA, BOTH OF WHOM ARE OFTEN
SUSPECTED OF HARBORING ANNEXATIONIST DESIGNS AGAINST
LEBANON, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS
VIEW AT THE PRESENT TIME. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE
CIVIL WAR, LEBANON MUST BUILD A CREDIBLE INTERNAL
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FORCE CAPABLE OF CONFRONTING ARMED USRISINGS IN A HIGHLY
MOBILE AND DECISIVE FASHION. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTTEL B, WHICH WAS IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL
INQUIRIES IN LATE JUNE AND JULY CONCERNING THE PROPOSED
MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR LEBANON, RESPONDED TO
REFTTEL A ON NUMEROUS POINTS, ALTHOUGH NOT FORMALLY

DIRECTED TO THAT END. FOLLOWING IS A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE.

3. US INTERESTS (REFTEL A, PARA 3). US INTERESTS IN LEBANON ARE SET FORTH IN OUR 1906 OF APRIL 26, 1977.

4. OBJECTIVES (PARA 3). THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF A US MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR LEBANON ARE TO HELP PROVIDE LEBANON'S CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITH SUFFICIENT MILITARY FORCE TO CONFRONT ANY INTERNAL RESISTANCE, WHETHER FROM DISSIDENT LEBANESE GROUPS OR FROM ARMED PALESTINIANS GROUPS. SECONDLY, THE REESTABLISHMENT OF A LEBANESE ARMED FORCE IS NECESSARY TO REESTABLISH THE PREEMINENCE, INDEPENDENCE AND VIABILITY OF THE LEBANESE STATE ITSELF WITHIN LEBANON AND TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF SECURITY AFTER TWO YEARS OF CIVIL WAR, IN WHICH THE COUNTRY CAN MOVE FORWARD ON ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION, SOCIAL REFORM AND POLITICAL RECONCILIATION.

5. THREAT ANALYSIS (PARA 4A). THE PRINCIPAL THREAT TO LEBANON IS INTERNAL AND MULTIFACETED. THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION'S VARIOUS ELEMENTS (BOTH MODERATES AND REJECTIONISTS) HAVE A WELL-TRAINED AND HEAVILY-EQUIPPED FORCE OF PERHAPS 15,000. LEBANESE LEFTIST GROUPS, GENERALLY ALLIED WITH THE PALESTINIANS, AND NOW DISPERSED AND UNDERGROUND, BUT NEVERTHELESS IN A CONFIDENTIAL

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NEW CRISIS PROBABLY COULD MUSTER 2-4,000 FIGHTERS, WITH SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT WEAPONS AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT, UP TO FIELD ARTILLERY. THE RIGHTIST-CHRISTIAN MILITIAS STILL HAVE EXTENSIVE WEAPONS CACHES AND COULD, IF FULLY MOBILIZED, PROBABLY FIELD 20-25,000 FIGHTERS.

6. THE LEBANESE STATE IN CONFRONTING THESE ELEMENTS AT PRESENT CAN ONLY FIELD A FEW HUNDRED REGULAR ARMY TROOPS, AND, IF PROVIDED THE NECESSARY ASSISTANCE, COULD PERHAPS FIELD TWO MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADES BY THE END OF CALENDAR YEAR 1977. THE STATE SURVIVES AT ALL UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY BECAUSE OF THE "ARAB SECURITY FORCE" (ASF) OF SOME 30,000 TROOPS, OVERWHELMINGLY SYRIAN. THIS EMBASSY FULLY SHARES THE GOL ASSESSMENT THAT ITS NEEDS ARE FOR AN ARMY OF APPROXIMATELY 20,000 TROOPS, HIGHLY TRAINED, MOBILE AND WELL-EQUIPPED AND ABLE TO COPE WITH DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRIFE. THERE IS NO VIABLE "POLITICAL" OR "DIPLOMATIC" ALTERNATIVE TO A STRATEGY OF ASSERTION OF THE HEGEMONY OF THE STATE. THIS EMBASSY AND THE GOL ARE IN COMPLETE ACCORD ON THIS POINT.

7. POTENTIALLY HOSTILE CAPABILITIES IN THE AREA (PARA 4B). EITHER ISRAEL OR SYRIA POTENTIALLY COULD DEVELOP ANNEXATIONIST DESIGNS ON ALL OR PART OF LEBANON, ALTHOUGH THERE APPEARS TO BE VERY LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH A THREAT AT THE PRESENT TIME. IN THE CASE OF ISRAEL, LEBANESE FEAR ISRAELI AMBITIONS TO MAKE THE LITANI RIVER (SOME 20 KILOMETERS NORTH OF AND PARALLEL TO THE PRESENT BORDER) ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDER OR, ALTERNATIVELY, TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE RIVER'S WATER RESOURCES. THE ISRAELI-LEBANESE BORDER WAS SETTLED BY A 1949 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AND THERE IS NO SERIOUS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT EITHER COUNTRY WANTS TO CHANGE IT. ISRAEL HAS NEVERTHELESS SOUGHT IN RECENT MONTHS TO ESTABLISH FOR ITSELF A SPHERE OF INFLUENCE ON LEBANESE TERRITORY ADJACENT TO THE

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BORDER, USING LEBANESE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS FOR THE PURPOSE. ISRAEL'S INTEREST, CONSTRUED IN NARROWLY MILITARY TERMS, IS TO CREATE A BUFFER AGAINST RENEWAL OF PALESTINIAN COMMANDO RAIDS AGAINST ISRAEL SUCH AS FREQUENTLY OCCURRED IN THE EARLY 1970'S, BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR. THE ISRAELIS HAVE ALSO BUILT A NUMBER OF ROADS AND OTHER FACILITIES WHICH WOULD MAKE EASIER AN INVASION OR OCCUPATION OF SOUTH LEBANON ON THEIR PART. NEVERTHELESS, THE ACTUAL MILITARY STRENGTH OF LEBANON IS SO TOTALLY OUT OF PROPORTION TO THAT OF ISRAEL THAT IT IS UNREALISTIC FOR LEBANON TO EVEN CONSIDER ATTEMPTING TO DEVELOP A MILITARY FORCE WITH WHICH IT COULD DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST THE ISRAELIS. LEBANON MUST, PERFORCE, RELY ON DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT TO PRESERVE ITS SOUTHERN BORDER.

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8. SYRIA ALSO PRESENTS A LONG-TERM POTENTIAL THREAT. SYRIA AND LEBANON TOGETHER WERE MANDATED TO FRANCE BY THE NATIONS AS ONE TERRITORY AND SOME SYRIANS STILL ENTERTAIN IDEAS OF A "GREATER SYRIA" WHICH WOULD INCLUDE, IN ADDITION TO SYRIA ITSELF, LEBANON, JORDAN AND PALESTINE. THE PRESENT REGIME IN SYRIA, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO HAVE NO SUCH AMBITIONS. THE PRESENT OCCUPATION OF MUCH OF LEBANON BY SYRIAN FORCES WAS AT THE INVITATION OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT ITSELF, AND IS WELCOMED BY THE LEBANESE POPULATION, WITH SOME NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, AS IN THE ISRAELI CASE, LEBANON CANNOT POSSIBLY HOPE TO ASPIRE TO PROTECT ITSELF AGAINST HYPOTHETICAL SYRIAN EXPANSIONARY DESIGNS BY PURELY MILITARY MEANS, AND MUST RELY ON DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT IN SUCH AN EVENTUALITY.

9. GOL VIEW OF MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IT NEEDS (PARA 4C). THE GOL HAS DEVELOPED A PLAN TO FIELD SEVERAL MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADES, MODERATELY ARMED AND INITIALLY WITHOUT TANKS. SUCH A FORCE WOULD NOT BE ADEQUATE TO DEFEND LEBANON AGAINST A HYPOTHETICAL AGGRESSION FROM
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SYRIA OR ISRAEL (BOTH OF WHICH HAVE CONSIDERABLE ARMORED FORCES) BUT IT IS INTENDED RATHER TO CONFRONT INTERNAL DISSIDENTS. THIS EMBASSY SUPPORTS GOL VIEW THAT SUCH AN APPROACH IS SUITABLE TO INTERNAL SECURITY THREAT.

10. US INTERESTS IN SUPPORTING PROPOSED GOL FORCES (PARA 4C). US INTERESTS IN FINDING AN OVERALL MIDDLE EASE PEACE SOLUTION, ASSURING OIL SUPPLIES AND EXCLUDING SOVIET INFLUENCE ARE ALL DIRECTLY SERVED BY THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SOME KIND OF CIVIL ORDER IN LEBANON. THE PROPOSED GOL FORCE IS THEREFORE DIRECTLY SUPPORTIVE OF MAJOR US INTERESTS. THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES WHICH MAKE MORE SENSE OR COST LESS. THE GOL DOES ENVISION ACTIVE PURSUIT OF A PROCESS OF INTERNAL POLITICAL RECONCILIATION, WHICH--TO THE DEGREE IT IS SUCCESSFUL--WILL LESSEN THE INITIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE ARMY'S INTERNAL SECURITY ROLE, BUT EVEN UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES THE ARMY WILL CONTINUE TO BE NEEDED FOR THAT ROLE. BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR IT WAS THE ARMY WHICH WAS USED FOR MAINTAINING INTERNAL SECURITY WHENEVER THERE

WAS ANY PERCEPTIBLE INCREASE IN TENSION, AND IT
WILL PLAY THE SAME ROLE IN THE FUTURE.

11. IN THE CASE OF THE EXISTING CHRISTIAN MILITIAS, IT
IS THE BELIEF OF THE GOL, WHICH THIS EMBASSY SHARES,
THAT THEY CANNOT ASSURE NATIONAL (AS OPPOSED TO RELIGIO-
ETHNIC COMMUNITY) INTERESTS. LEBANON'S MOSLEMS WILL
NEVER ACCEPT A CHRISTIAN MILITIA ORGANIZATION AS A
GUARANTOR OF THEIR SECURITY; CONVERSELY, LEBANON'S
CHRISTIANS WILL NEVER ACCEPT MUSLIM OR LEFTIST MILITIA
ORGANIZATIONS AS GUARANTORS OF THEIR SECURITY. GIVEN
THEIR ALIEN STATUS, MEMBERS OF THE PALESTINIAN ARMED
FORCES ARE UNACCEPTABLE AS ELEMENTS OF ANY MILITARY
ORGANIZATION ASSURING INTERNAL LEBANESE SECURITY.
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12. DETAILED GOL REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC DEFENSE ARTICLES
AND SERVICES (PARA 4D) HAVE BEEN REPORTED (REFTEL C).
PROGRAM CALLS ESSENTIALLY FOR EQUIPMENT FOR ONE MECHANIZED
INFANTRY BRIGADE (LESS TANK BATTALION AND ARTILLERY) IN
FY 1977, TWO IN FY 1978 AND ONE IN FY 1979. FOLLOWING
ARE PRINCIPAL ITEMS FOR EACH BRIGADE:

WEAPONS

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| .45 CAL SUBMACHINE GUNS | 203 |
| M-16 RIFLES | 2756 |
| MG 7.62 FLEX | 55 |
| MG 7.62 BILI | 54 |
| 81MM MORTAR | 12 |
| 120MM MORTAR | 8 |
| 106MM RR | 12 |
| MILAN AT MISSILE | 12 |
| TOW MISSILE | 12 |
| .50 CAL MG | 8 |

VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT.

| | |
|---|-----|
| CARRIER CP LT TRACK M577A1 | 11 |
| CARRIER PERSONNEL FULL TRACK M113A1 | 111 |
| TRAILER CARGO 1/4 TON M416 | 55 |
| TRAILER CARGO 1-1/2 TON M105 A2 | 94 |
| TRAILER TANK WATER 500 GL. M 149 | 18 |
| TRUCK CARGO 1-1/4 6X6 M561 | 80 |
| TRUCK CARGO 2-1/2 M35 A2 | 115 |
| TRUCK TANK FULL SERVICING 2500 GL. 4X4 M559 | 15 |
| TRUCK, UTILITY 1/4 TON M151A2 | 135 |
| HELICOPTER, LT. | 3 |
| SEMI-TRAILER STAKE 12 TON | 14 |

SEMI TRAILER TK FUEL SERV. 5000 GL. 12 TONE 9
TRUCK TRACTOR 5T 25
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TRUCK VAN SHOP 2-1/2T M109 A3 9
CARRIER GUIDED MISSILE TOW 12

COMM & ELECT. EQUIPMENT

RADIO SET AN/GRC - 160 224
TRANSMITTER SET AN/PRT-4 94
RECEIVER SET RADIO AN/PRR 9 94
TELEPHONE SET TA 1/PT 148
TELEPHONE SET TA 312/PT 279

13. LESS COSTLY ALTERNATIVES (PARA 4D) ARE CONCEIVABLE, HOWEVER, THE ABOVE LIST IN THIS EMBASSY'S VIEW CONSTITUTES THE LEAST EXPENSIVE MILITARILY ACCEPTABLE ITEMS WHICH WOULD SERVE GOL AND US OBJECTIVES AND INTERESTS.

14. IMPACT ON THE LEBANESE ECONOMY (PARA 4E). BEING BASED ON CREDIT RATHER THAN CASH PAYMENT, THE PROPOSED MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR LEBANON WOULD NOT HAVE AN IMMEDIATE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC IMPACT IN LEBANON. PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LEBANESE ECONOMY SUGGEST DEBT SERVICE CAPABILITY WILL BE EXTENSIVE. DESPITE THE CIVIL WAR, THE LEBANESE CENTRAL BANK AT THE PRESENT TIME HAS GOLD AND FOREIGN CURRENCY RESERVES EXCEEDING \$1 BILLION. (THE GOL WANTS TO KEEP THIS WEALTH IN RESERVE AS A BACKING FOR BORROWING FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND OTHER PURPOSES. THE IBRD SUPPORTS THIS APPROACH, AS DOES THIS EMBASSY ACCORDINGLY, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE WISE FOR THE US TO ENCOURAGE LEBANON TO ATTEMPT TO BUILD ITS ARMED FORCES ON A CASH BASIS). BASIC MANPOWER AVAILABILITY IS MORE THAN ADEQUATE FOR THE SMALL ARMY ENVISIONED BY THE GOL. SINCE LEBANON ALREADY HAS A HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED POOL OF SKILLED MANPOWER, INCLUDING OFFICERS AND TROOPS
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OF THE PRE-CIVIL WAR ARMY, ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY WOULD LIKEWISE PRESENT NO PROBLEM.

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15. THE GOL, PARTICULARLY IN THE AFTERMATH OF TWO YEARS OF DEVASTATING CIVIL WAR, WOULD NATURALLY PREFER TO RECEIVE THESE GOODS AND SERVICES AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE COST, EVEN AT NO COST. IN SPITE OF THE CIVIL WAR, HOWEVER, THE LEBANESE ECONOMY SHOWS CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AND ALREADY THE GOVERNMENT HAS REESTABLISHED ITS CONTROL OF SIGNIFICANT SOURCES OF GOVERNMENTAL REVENUE (CUSTOMS DUTY AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TAXES). FURTHERMORE, LEBANON'S MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PROSPECTS (ASSUMING, OF COURSE, NO RENEWAL OF CIVIL WAR) ARE QUITE GOOD. WE BELIEVE IT CAN SUPPORT PAYMENTS FOR AN FMS PROGRAM WITH A MAGNITUDE OF AS MUCH AS \$100 MILLION OVER THREE YEARS. THE GOL IS PREPARED, AND HAS ALREADY BEGUN, TO SUPPLEMENT THE FMS CREDIT APPROACH WITH DIRECT CASH PURCHASES, BOTH COMMERCIALY AND ON AN FMS BASIS.

16. ALL OF THE ITEMS LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 12 ABOVE ARE INTENDED TO SERVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADES, AND ARE THUS DIRECTLY RESPONSIVE TO THE GOL'S INTERNAL SECURITY CONCERN AND THE MAJOR REGIONAL U.S. INTERESTS WHICH INTERNAL SECURITY IN LEBANON WOULD SERVE. THE TRAINING REQUESTS ARE ORIENTED TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A LEBANESE MILITARY STAFF CAPABLE OF COORDINATING,
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PLANNING AND DIRECTING THE USE OF SUCH FORCES AND THEREFORE SERVE THE SAME GOL OBJECTIVE AND THE SAME U.S. INTERESTS.

17. U.S. PERSONNEL REQUIRED IN COUNTRY (PARA 4F). THE

MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR LEBANON WILL BE SUPERVISED BY THE DAO. THE DEFENSE ATTACHE AND ARMY ATTACHE WILL PERFORM THE ON-SITE TASKS. THE DAO OPERATIONS COORDINATOR WILL ASSIST WITH ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. BECAUSE OF THE DAO'S AUSTERE MANNING, THERE MAY BE OCCASIONAL STAFF VISITS FROM EUCOM OR WASHINGTON-BASED SECURITY ASSISTANCE STAFF OFFICERS TO PROVIDE ON-SITE EXPERTISE.

18. ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPLY (PARA 4G). MOST OF THE REQUIRED ITEMS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM FRANCE (A TRADITIONAL MAJOR SUPPLIER) OR FROM OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES, SUCH AS GREAT BRITAIN. IT IS APPARENT, HOWEVER, THAT NEITHER IS WILLING TO MAKE AVAILABLE SUCH ITEMS AND SERVICES ON THE KIND OF CREDIT TERMS WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE GOL TO MOVE QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO REESTABLISH ITS ARMY.

19. ARMS CONTROL IMPACT (PARA 4H). LEBANON IS FACED ON ITS BORDERS BY TWO MAJOR REGIONAL MILITARY POWERS--ISRAEL AND SYRIA--BUT DOES NOT ASPIRE TO COMPETE WITH THEM MILITARILY. NOR DOES THE GOL SEEK HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED MODERN WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY. THE PROPOSED PLAN, THEREFORE, WILL NOT IN ANY WAY ADVERSELY AFFECT ARMS CONTROL EFFORTS.

20. HUMAN RIGHTS (PARA 4I). LEBANON'S BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IS THE WEAKNESS OF CIVIL AUTHORITY; THAT IS, EVERYBODY'S HUMAN RIGHTS. TO THE EXTENT THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE HELPS CREATE SUCH A VIABLE AUTHORITY, THE

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HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL LEBANESE WILL BE FAVORABLY AFFECTED. IN THE PAST, LEBANESE JUDICIAL PRACTICE HAS BEEN MODELED ON THE FRENCH, INCORPORATING WITH IT EXTENSIVE DUE PROCESS SAFEGUARDS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN CONFRONTED BY THE LAW. THE INTENT OF THE PROPOSED MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, IN PART, IS TO REESTABLISH CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE TRADITIONAL LEBANESE JUDICIARY SYSTEM CAN INDEED FUNCTION. DESPITE THE WEAKNESS OF THEIR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES AT THE PRESENT TIME, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT OF THE BASIC COMMITMENT OF THE LEBANESE PEOPLE AND OF THE PRESENT LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND EQUAL JUSTICE BEFORE THE LAW FOR ALL CITIZENS. LEBANON IS NOT WITHOUT BLEMISH IN THE PAST ON HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT ITS RECORD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT BY AREA STANDARDS. DENIAL OF U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT HUMAN RIGHTS IN A MOST FUNDAMENTAL WAY BY DENYING CITIZENS THE EVERYDAY PROTECTION AFFORDED BY ORDINARY CIVIL LAW ENFORCEMENT.

21. GOL SUPPORT FOR ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT (PARA 4J). THE LEBANESE STATE IS NOT A SUPPLIER OF WEAPONS TO ANY-ONE. THROUGHOUT ITS MODERN HISTORY, LEBANON HAS NEVER SOUGHT TO BE A PURCHASER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF AN ORDER OR MAGNITUDE THAT WOULD HAVE ANY IMPACT WHATSOEVER ON THE ARMS PURCHASE PLANS OF ITS NEIGHBORS. IF ANYTHING, IT IS LEBANON'S EXCESSIVE RESTRAINT AS AN ARMS PURCHASER IN THE PAST WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO ITS PRESENT DIS-ORDERED CONDITION.

22. IMET GRANT TRAINING AND U.S. INTERESTS (PARA 4K). THE GOL IS NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN EQUIPMENT-RELATED TRAINING, BUT RATHER SEEKS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FROM THE U.S. THIS CORRESPONDS ENTIRELY WITH U.S. PROGRAM ORIENTATION (DESCRIBED IN REFTEL A). WE WOULD EXPECT GOL TO SEEK EQUIPMENT-RELATED TRAINING ONLY TO THE MINIMUM NECESSARY IN SUPPORT OF EQUIPMENT PURCHASES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT
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THE GOL WILL PAY TRAVEL AND LIVING EXPENSES TO MAXIMIZE TRAINING AVAILABLE UNDER IMET.

23. THE AFOREGOING IS A JUSTIFICATION FOR A NEW U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR A COUNTRY WHICH HAS RECEIVED VIRTUALLY NO U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT IS THEREFORE INHERENTLY ZERO-BASES IN ITS APPROACH, AND DOES NOT RELY FOR ITS JUSTIFICATION ON PERPETUATION OF AN INSTITUTIONALIZED ON-GOING PROGRAM. NOR DO THE GOL OR THIS EMBASSY CONCEIVE OF IT AS THE BEGINNING OF AN ENDLESS PROGRAM. THE GOL HAS AN URGENT BUT TEMPORARY PROBLEM BEYOND ITS OWN IMMEDIATE RESOURCES. AS SOON AS THOSE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE--PERHAPS IN 1980--NEITHER THE GOL NOR THIS EMBASSY ENVISION CONTINUATION OF THE OUTLINED U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO LEBANON.

24. AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT. (PARA 1). LEBANON'S CRYING NEED FOR A VIABLE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY DOCUMENTED IN REPORTING FROM THIS EMBASSY, AND IS WELL KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT. I NEED SCARCELY REITERATE HERE THAT THE STABILITY OF LEBANON IS A MAJOR ESSENTIAL IF PEACE IS TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST; NOR THAT THE REESTABLISHMENT OF A VIABLE LEBANESE ARMY IS AN ABSOLUTE PREREQUISITE TO REESTABLISHMENT OF THIS STABILITY.

25. IN MY VIEW, THE GOL IS TAKING AN EMINENTLY REASONABLE APPROACH TO THIS EXCRUTIATINGLY DIFFICULT PROBLEM. I CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT A U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WILL ASSURE THAT LEBANON WILL FIND INTERNAL PEACE AND

ORDER, BUT I CAN GUARANTEE THAT OUR FAILURE TO ACT WILL
SHARPLY INCREASE THE CHANCES FOR RENEWED INSTABILITY IN
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